

**ARIZONA STATE PARKS
NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(NAPAC)**

Minutes of the meeting held:

Thursday, July 24, 2008

at:

Pima County Natural Resources, Parks, and Recreation
3500 River Road
Tucson, AZ

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Hare called the meeting to order at 12:13pm. The following people were present, and the Committee achieved a quorum. (Please note that Chair Hare revised the order of the agenda for time and attendances purposes.)

Committee Members Present: Trevor Hare, Chair
Sheridan Stone, Vice-Chair (*via telephone, 1:30pm*)
Linda Kennedy (arrived 2:25pm)
John Hays (arrived 12:25pm)
Phyllis Hughes (*via telephone, until 1:10pm*)
Jared Underwood

Committee Members Absent: Don Young

Other Individuals Present: Jay Ream, Assistant Director, Arizona State Parks (ASP)
Max Castillo, ASP (*ex-officio, via telephone*)
Dan Shein, ASP
Bob Casavant, ASP
Joanne Roberts, ASP
Ray Warriner, ASP
Jennifer Parks, Asst. Manager, SCSNA
Steven Haas, Manager, SCSNA
Ruth Shulman, ASP

Guests: Mr. and Mrs. Richard (Diane) Collins, C-6 Ranch
Rich Collins, (Son of Richard and Diane), C-6 Ranch

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

Members and Staff introduced themselves.

C. OLD BUSINESS

1. Approval of NAPAC Minutes for the April 28, 2008 meeting.

Ms. Shulman noted that Mr. Stone had forwarded small corrections to her via eMail, which will be made. There being no other changes suggested by NAPAC, Chair Hare entertained a motion. Mr. Underwood moved to accept the minutes as amended. Mr. Hays seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

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2. Update on NAPAC's proposed presentation on the Kartchner Caverns Conservation Zone (KCCZ).

(Interested parties are referred to the minutes of the NAPAC meeting of November 29, 2007 for background on the original KCCZ presentation to NAPAC and discussion.)

Dr. Casavant referred to the previous presentation, the prioritization of the parcels based on the hydrologic connection to the cave. Since that presentation, Dr. Casavant and Mr. Warriner researched deed information on all the parcels surrounding the park, and also near Benson in anticipation of conversations with Mr. Mark Kartchner. Mr. Kartchner has two water wells and 29 acres. The Sands Ranch property to the southeast also has one good water well on their property to the south of Mr. Kartchner's lease. The purpose of the Conservation Zone is to identify properties around the Kartchner Caverns State Park to protect the park's viewshed, and water resources, from encroachment and negative impacts of urbanization (e.g. noise light, air and water contamination).

He noted that the USFS has asked for final public comment on mineral withdrawal in the Guindani Wash area. ASP provided comment not only on surface flow, but also groundwater flow and groundwater linkages to the park well and cave resource. ASP also extended its assessment to include Middle Canyon (MC) Wash in the Coronado National Forest as an additional watershed component that impacts the cave. Dr. Casavant noted that the MC Wash was referred to the Dept. of Interior/BLM for mineral withdrawal. (Ms. Kennedy joined the meeting at this time.)

Further discussion on the upcoming ballot measure regarding Arizona State Lands followed. Dr. Casavant also noted that the boundary 159.9-acre purchase of McGrew Springs had not yet been either posted or fenced, but the project is in progress. He reminded that the remainder of that surrounding area owned by Freeport-McMorAn, should continue to be considered for inclusion if it becomes available.

Dr. Casavant also said that he had provided public comment to the Coronado National Forest and hosted a productive meeting with USFS and ASP staff at KCSP regarding the grazing allotments near the park. He also mentioned a meeting with Mr. Mark Kartchner, attended by himself, Ray Warriner, Bob Sejkora of ASP, to discuss Mr. Kartchner's desire to assist KCSP by leasing his water resources east of Highway 90 for use on the park. That water may be leased in the future.

Dr. Casavant continued by noting that the limestone formation that hosts the caves extends beneath the surface and fan deposits to the north, northeast across Highway 90, and to the south. This interpretation is based on well-water studies and geophysical surveys. Further discussion on supporting geomorphological indices followed.

Chair Hare asked about the potential for caverns in the subsurface limestone formations off park. Dr. Casavant said that there is a 90+% chance of caverns, which are not accessible at this time. Chair Hare then asked whether the known cavern has been fully explored for access, to which Dr. Casavant said they had not been. Chair Hare feels that this information makes the KCCZ discussion even more important.

Mr. Stone asked about the USFS and mineral withdrawal issue, and whether they identify mineral withdrawals in terms of surface watershed as opposed to the three-dimensional geology. Dr. Casavant said that surface watershed was the main criteria they were using, but the level of their understanding (surface and subsurface geology) depends on the

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knowledge and data that is researched or available to the individual geologist or hydrologist in the region.

ASP has been instrumental in highlighting geologic linkages to a variety of professional groups and agencies in the area, as well as conducting tours of the park area for several professional groups. These groups have and continue to request tours based on the hydrogeologic linkages ASP has researched and interpreted. Mr. Stone asked whether the USFS has the linkage information, and whether they could use that information to expand the withdrawal. Dr. Casavant said that only Guindani Wash is included at this time, but ASP had requested that the Middle Canyon Wash geologic/geomorphic data be included, and the USFS will take this information to the highest level for consideration. Further discussion on mineral withdrawal followed.

Dr. Casavant asked NAPAC what next steps they would like to see. Chair Hare said that the next step should be to take this discussion to the ASP Board and ask for a Conservation Zone designation. However, what that designation might mean to ASP and the Board is open to speculation. Chair Hare provided several examples, such as an acquisition zone, etc. of what the meaning might be. Dr. Casavant noted that several of the ideas fall into the "Growing Smarter" plans of the City of Benson based on a previous meeting he had with the City Manager and City Planner/Engineer. Chair Hare mentioned obtaining mineral rights from the Federal Government as one item. He also mentioned the "Rural Preservation Area" as an Arizona phenomenon.

Dr. Casavant noted that the water issue is of the utmost importance. The geologic linkages are dependent on each since the park and cave water table exist within a fractured/faulted limestone aquifer. Keeping the populace informed becomes a large education and outreach effort for ASP. Chair Hare noted that the education and outreach is a good frame. *(Mr. Ream made comments here, which are inaudible.)*

Dr. Casavant noted that he was planning to contact the National Park Service (NPS) person in charge of designating national landmarks. He will follow through on the idea with the NPS. Chair Hare asked whether this designation would also contain management guidelines. Mr. Ream asked whether it would be possible to have the caves designated as an Arizona landmark first. Chair Hare noted that the management guidelines in development for ASP capture some of the ideas discussed. It might be possible to have an education zone outside of the deeded property of the park that would help keeping care of the caves in the public forefront. Mr. Ream states it is hard to police yourself and we can only put restrictions on properties that we manage. He further states that we would be asking ASPB to develop a policy that does police itself using KCSP as the model.

Dr. Casavant noted that new microbiologic and other species are being discovered in the cave on a regular basis. Knowledge of the cave environment and ecosystem has been advanced in the last five years incrementally.

Chair Hare noted that the retirement of Director Travous in twelve months provides a deadline for the adoption of the KCCZ concept. Further discussion on the history of the cave and how its current processes were developed. (Mr. Hays departed at this time.) Ms. Kennedy noted that guidelines, policies and procedures should take care of the concept. Guidelines should come from NAPAC, and policies and procedures should come from park managers and the ASP Board.

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Mr. Stone said that he felt the conversation had expanded beyond its logical scope. There should be a different discussion for both external and internal threats to the park, and these ideas are getting confounded and diluted. This makes the concept harder and more confusing to discuss with others. He suggests that when NAPAC makes recommendations for acquisitions to the ASP Board, the idea of acquisitions outside of existing state natural areas be presented for various scientific reason, as well as having the ASP Board develop a policy to designate conservation zones at the same time. This would include defining conservation zones around existing natural areas to make certain that ASP's interests are always clear to other agencies, etc. He feels that the designation of conservation zones themselves falls beyond the purview of NAPAC. Any and all decisions need to be based on scientific information, and a scientific information foundation must be unreservedly adopted by ASP, especially in terms of management of natural areas and parks. Information sharing and articulation would be paramount in discussions with landowners outside of ASP's deeded property. Dr. Casavant said that ASP will be adopting more proactive stances in the future regarding their interests.

Mr. Stone said the recommendation should eventually include taking into account subterranean areas and air space.

Chair Hare asked Dr. Casavant if he would be comfortable, as next steps, developing ideas on what potential threats exist in the conservation zone and how it all ties back to ASP's interests. Dr. Casavant noted that any discussion of that sort should include the USFS, the Arizona State Trust Land Department, City of Benson, ADOT and a member of NAPAC. Chair Hare also noted that Mr. Stone's ideas should also be taken into consideration. Mr. Stone asked whether Dr. Casavant's idea of including the USFS and others would ultimately result in having a conservation zone delineated on a map by forming interagency partnerships. Dr. Casavant said that no formal talks have been had so far, but that the concept of buffering had been introduced during the public comments made on grazing allotments, etc. Mr. Stone noted that there should be a careful consideration of the way this concept is communicated to the ASP Board, especially by considering the focus of the presentation (new concept vs. importance of the caverns and application of the new concept). Further discussion on the presentation (as a topic) followed.

Ms. Roberts said that, as part of leading the ASP Board into a conservation frame of mind, that NAPAC needs to put in some "face-time" to discuss any of these issues. She further states that no one on the current Board was part of the creation of KCSP and every "generation" of board members need to embrace conservation. Mr. Ream noted that this Board is a conscientious group and will read any information placed into their agenda packets. Further discussion on "local Board representatives" followed.

Chair Hare thanked Dr. Casavant for the update.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Assistant Director Jay Ream to discuss the Heritage Fund allotment for Natural Areas acquisitions and the budget for ASP.

Jay Ream, Assistant Director of ASP, informed NAPAC that ASP is in the process of purchasing the Rockin' River Ranch at a little over 200 acres with a Forest Service lease. The ranch is currently an equestrian boarding and riding facility. The ranch is located in phase II of the VRG. Mr. Ream also noted that the ranch has 54 acres of irrigated water rights, which are post-adjudication rights. The rights are located downstream from

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currently owned ASP properties along the Verde River, and are a main reason for the property's purchase. Mr. Ream also noted that the property has 100 acres of mesquite bosque.

Mr. Ream continued by saying that the property was brought to ASP's attention by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) directly through Director Travous and in confidentiality with ASPB. In order to move rapidly on the opportunity, and to allow the current equestrian concessionaires to continue business until their leases expire, the purchase needed to be conducted quietly (at the request of the owners and TNC.) Therefore, NAPAC was not involved and notified until this time. The ASP Board recently approved a purchase agreement, which outlines the conditions of the purchase. The Board, at the meeting of July 18, 2008, approved using \$7.8 million of Natural Areas Heritage Funds to purchase the property. The closing date for the purchase is September 12, 2008.

Mr. Ream noted developed property includes a six-room lodge, a large smokehouse, and old "zipline" roping arena, and large barns, some of which is in disrepair. There are also 3-4 other buildings on the property in various states. There is river frontage on the property as well (.06 river miles). The formerly farmed fields have all "returned" to pasturage.

Revenues from the equestrian concessionaires amount to approximately \$300-\$400,000 annually. More than half of the property is set to return to mesquite bosque as the concessionaire leases expire. Mr. Ream notes that in light of the revenues generated by the equestrian facilities, it may be well to continue those concessions. There are also some large sycamore trees. TNC recommends allowing the entire property to return to mesquite bosque. Mr. Ream states the ASPB wants to keep using the water rights under agricultural rights, especially to maintain the pond.

Mr. Ream also noted that one important reason for committing the funds to the purchase is to prevent them from being "swept" by the Legislature due to the current state budget crisis. Ms. Hughes asked if the Legislature had touched any of the Natural Areas Heritage money. Mr. Ream replied in the negative, but there were sweeps in other special programs. Ms. Hughes asked what funds would remain available in the Natural Areas Heritage Fund acquisition budget if the Rockin' R Ranch purchase goes through. Mr. Ream provided a further explanation of the Legislative sweep process. Ms. Hughes asked for the amount of the remainder of acquisitions funds. Mr. Ream said that the funds would be slightly over \$2 million. The next appropriation is due shortly, and will consist of \$1.7 million over the next fiscal year, which began July 1, 2008. He also noted that these funds come in quarterly allotments.

Mr. Underwood clarified that the purchase would be made with Natural Areas Heritage Funds, which was confirmed by Mr. Ream. Mr. Underwood then asked if NAPAC had visited the property. Mr. Ream responded in the negative and further stated that he was attending this NAPAC meeting in order to extend an invitation to the committee to see the property. He said that the two concession leases expire in December and March respectively.

Ms. Hughes confirmed that the due diligence process was underway. Mr. Ream replied that phase one of the due diligence was concluded and had turned up an underground storage tank and a burn pile, both in need of investigation. There may be environmental consequences to both. Ms. Hughes asked if the tank would be removed. Mr. Ream said that filling it with sand had mitigated the tank issue. There will be tests of the soil surrounding

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the tank in order to verify that there are no leaks or other issues. Mr. Ream noted that the principal owner was an LLC corporation with seven or eight members, who have not owned the property for long.

Ms. Hughes then asked about the access to the property, and its location and nature. Mr. Ream said that access currently is off of Salt Mine Road in Camp Verde. Mr. Ream went on to discuss the possibility of Southwest Willow Flycatcher habitat on the property, or at least nearby. He continued discussing access by noting that there is a permit to access the property across US Forest Service (USFS) land, which will need to be reacquired. He also noted that the ASPB moved not to purchase without the permit. There will be no issues with the permit, however there is a timing issue. TNC will have to acquire the permit, and then transfer it to ASP. The USFS property is a very short piece; approximately ¼ mile. Mr. Warriner noted that there is approximately one mile of riverfront. The Prescott and Coconino National Forests own most of the adjoining land. The property is also approximately 1.5-2 river miles away from the start of the National Wild and Scenic River designation point at Beasley Flats.

Chair Hare asked about the size of the footprint (buildings and other disturbed areas) in relation to the size of the property as a whole. Mr. Castillo said that the property was strangely shaped, and determining that relationship would be difficult. Ms. Hughes asked about the property on the other side of the river boundary. Mr. Castillo noted that there is one private owner, and the others are National Forests. Chair Hare asked if there could be a determination of acreage in the disturbed areas. Mr. Castillo states that there are 54 acres of irrigated fields and other areas of mesquite bosque with some deciduous woodland tree composition. Mr. Warriner said that the mature mesquite bosque is between 80 and 100 acres, and the riverfront is undisturbed. He also noted that 50% of the property is undisturbed (the mesquite bosque) and the remaining portion is in varying degrees of disturbance.

Chair Hare asked if the ASP Board discussed land management, particularly in light of possibly keeping the equestrian concessionaire leases open. Mr. Ream said that the Board will at least continue the current leases until they expire naturally, as buying out the leases would not be wise use of funds. Mr. Ream noted there are issues regarding back fees from the concessionaire and these would need to be addressed prior to purchase. However, Mr. Ream further states that it is unknown what Parks would really do at this time. The income from the leases would allow for some management, and may at least allow for a Park Ranger to patrol along the property.

Chair Hare asked if the Natural Areas Heritage Funds could be used if the property under consideration did not meet the five basic criteria that define a natural area. Ms. Roberts said that Ms. Hughes had been doing work on the statutory requirements for natural areas as part of the prioritization "scorecard" in development. Fund use should be tied back to the statute, and the statute should also drive the prioritization of acquisitions. Chair Hare said that the Board, since they have already made the decision to purchase this property, was not constrained from doing so by the lack of a NAPAC recommendation. Mr. Ream said that it would take "a pretty big hole" in the property to reverse the Board's decision, however they would be appreciative of receiving NAPAC's input. The Board has not visited the property either, and have accepted TNC's evaluation. Mr. Warriner suggested have a Land Acquisition, Selection and Prioritization (LASP) subcommittee meeting on the property in addition to a site visit.

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Ms. Hughes asked if this property were part of the VRG Project Area, as previously approved. Mr. Ream said that there are, effectively, two VRG projects, phase one and phase two. Phase one begins at Tuzigoot and runs to the Bridgeport Bridge; phase two runs from the bridge to Beasley Flats. At the moment, the Simonton acquisition is all that exists in phase two. This property would, in Mr. Ream's estimation, constitute the first major purchase in phase two. Ms. Hughes asked if the Board had approved phase two; Mr. Ream states that the Greenway concept had been approved by the Board, and that "phase two" was merely a reference distinction.

Chair Hare asked about the effect of this acquisition on other recommendations that NAPAC have underway such as the Sonoita Creek Ranch and other Verde River Greenway properties. After some clarification, Mr. Warriner said that by the end of the FY2009 fiscal year, there should be approximately \$3.5-3.7 million available for other acquisitions. Mr. Ream also said that, by forming a partnership with TNC, there are other acquisition funding possibilities available. Ms. Hughes asked how the TNC partnership would work. Mr. Ream says that, in essence, TNC purchases properties and holds them until they can be reimbursed. Chair Hare said that the Santa Cruz River properties at Rio Rico had been evaluated by NAPAC, and that TNC should be showing us other properties than those degraded properties previously evaluated. The TNC also accompanied NAPAC on the property evaluations at the VRG area in January. Mr. Castillo notes that the Verde River is a TNC Priority Area for the State of Arizona because of the water rights issues. He further states that the Rockin R Ranch is 4 miles from Beasley Flats. Mr. Ream also noted that the water rights translate into quite a lot of acre-feet of water in the river, which is important. Further discussion on possible TNC acquisitions in the area, and clarification on the amount of Natural Area Heritage monies to be used in acquisition, personal property acquisition, and due diligence allotment followed.

Chair Hare noted that TNC also expressed interest in the Sonoita Ranch property. Ms. Roberts said that a discussion of Sonoita Creek Ranch was on the agenda, but that a major part of that discussion would be that no one entity would be able to purchase the ranch on their own. There have been several partners who have stepped forward to work with the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) lead, Joan Scott, on the acquisition of the Sonoita Creek Ranch. Those partners are private individuals, such as the Collins family, the USFS, TNC, Trust for Public Land (TPL) and ASP. The discussion for today would center on whether ASP is interested in a partnership, and making partnership work. TNC has prioritized the VRG area as the major area in the state, but they have expressed interest in various properties in Southern Arizona. *(There was considerable discussion going on in the background while the attempt to reach Sheridan went on. This discussion was inaudible. Phyllis was audible commenting that she was fading out.)*

Mr. Ream went on to discuss the ASP Director's interest in the Sonoita Ranch acquisition. Ms. Roberts said that the property is worth forming the partnership, in addition to the natural areas features. Further discussion on the political component of each acquisition followed. Mr. Ream said that if TNC had not brought the Rockin' River Ranch to ASP's attention, the ASP Board would not likely have purchased it without NAPAC's recommendation. Ms. Roberts said that the Sonoita Creek Ranch property is a similar example of watershed protection that could engage ASP's natural areas program. Further discussion followed regarding partnerships and the Sonoita Creek Ranch.

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Chair Hare asked for clarification of the price for the VRG ranch property. Mr. Ream said that the purchase price could not exceed the \$7.3 million set aside, including all due diligence and environmental mitigation work. Mr. Ream also noted that there is personal property such as furniture on the ranch, which would be available for purchase. The property had been set up for hospitality, so there are many amenities along that line.

(During another attempt to reach Sheridan, there was more inaudible discussion.) The committee adjourned for a break at 1:10pm, at which time Ms. Hughes left the meeting. The committee reconvened at 1:27pm.

Mr. Underwood asked whether this particular property acquisition was handled in a “backwards” process from the usual process, and if so, what is NAPAC’s ultimate role as an advisory committee to the ASP Board. Mr. Ream said that traditionally acquisitions come to ASP’s attention in a variety of ways, including private persons, through TNC (as in the case of the Rockin’ River Ranch) or through other means. In the case of this acquisition, the “sub-rosa” circumstances made it necessary to proceed without the usual process involving NAPAC. Once the purchase contract was approved by the ASP Board, NAPAC’s role would be to provide information on the natural areas values of the property, and how it fits in the natural areas program. Mr. Ream then suggested that NAPAC visit the entire VRG project area, with an eye toward excluding properties for acquisition. Mr. Shein noted that there are also discussions occurring with the Verde River Land Trust (?) regarding the VRG.

(Mr. Stone was connected by phone at this time – 1:30pm.)

2. Discuss Sonoita Creek Ranch acquisition and review and discuss site visit document.

Ms. Roberts noted that NAPAC members had received the consensus property evaluation form prior to the meeting. Since Ms. Kennedy was delayed in traffic, Ms. Roberts suggested hearing Mr. Hays and Mr. Stone’s input on the property. She also noted that the Collins family, who owns grazing leases that abut the property, is also present. Ms. Roberts then turned the discussion over to Mr. Stone and Mr. Hays.

Mr. Stone said that he found, in general, the property was very impressive in terms of the context and the present natural areas values. The acreage is substantial and covers much used bottom-land, as well as an upland slope area. Soil conditions look good with some agricultural blading. The vegetation has good diversity with grassland and woody communities. The “holding ponds” have well developed riparian/aquatic vegetation. He notes that these are irrigated ponds. The property is adjacent to USFS land and has no “fence line” change in conditions from private to Forest Service lands. Mr. Stone also mentioned a Corral canyon with good riparian and woodland vegetation. On the whole, Mr. Stone found the property impressive, as well as the amount of water rights that will allow rehabilitation and restoration over time. The potential of the land, even including the present buildings and possible grazing by partners, is substantial for vegetation and wildlife corridor connectivity.

Chair Hare asked the Collins family about the ponds and the irrigated fields, and their importance to the family grazing operation, especially since they have already protected many of the existing riparian areas. Mr. Rich Collins noted there is a pipeline system fed from a well on the deeded land.

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Chair Hare asked if Mr. Warriner had looked at comparable properties in the area. He had not. Chair Hare suspects that the eleven-hundred acres would be worth, approximately, \$5 million dollars. Mr. Warriner will do some research and send an eMail to NAPAC with a possible range of prices. Mr. Underwood asked if there is currently an offer on the table for this property. Ms. Roberts noted that Michael Patrick of TPL had been given a price of \$7 million if purchased for a conservation usage of the property in November 2007, however that price had fluctuated a lot since that discussion. Mr. Hays noted that the flat area is floodplain, and consists of buildable property with considerable engineering. Further discussion on floodplain and floodway followed. Mr. Hays noted that approximately 1/4-1/3 of the property is floodplain.

Mr. Collins said that their property abuts the USFS, and the water pipeline goes along the fenceline. Mr. Stone asked if the water pipeline was a gravity feed down from the spring. Mr. Collins replied that the water source was their private source about two miles south of Sonoita. The water is pumped to a storage tank, and from there is gravity-fed 10 1/4 mile from the property of interest. Mr. Stone asked whether the Collins's were familiar with any existing springs on the USFS land. Mr. Collins said that there is Corral Canyon Springs, which the site visit group had seen. The natural waters had been replaced with pipeline to better manage the area. Mr. Collins further states that there is no utilization of the Corral Spring at this time.

Mr. Underwood asked who owns Monkey Springs. Chair Hare noted that the ownership is private though there is a conservation easement on the springs held by either TNC or TPL. Mr. Hays noted that there may be Gila Topminnow in the springs.

Chair Hare then asked Ms. Roberts to discuss the partnership potentials. Ms. Roberts noted that AGFD's Joan Scott had been in discussion with the owner for some time. The first site evaluation of the property was attended by ASP's Steve Haas. Ms. Scott has been the lead on this acquisition. As part of the evolution of the partnership, TPL became involved and there were discussions with the Southern Arizona Land Trust, and US Fish and Wildlife, which may provide Section 6 funds. The Collins family is involved, and is interested in continuing their grazing rights. All partners agree that the property should be acquired and protected. The next step would be to have the partners meet to determine their individual interests. She suggested that one or two members of NAPAC be a part of the continuing partnership discussions, providing recommendations to the Board on continuing the partnership as a functioning entity regarding the property.

Chair Hare asked what water rights came with the property. Ms. Roberts said that is 588 acre-feet from Monkey Springs. Chair Hare asked if there were water right attached to the Sonoita Creek Natural Area. There are instream flow rights along a portion of that land.

Dr. Casavant asked how far the property is from the proposed Rosemont Mine. Mr. Hays noted that the mine would be located on the other side of the Santa Ritas, quite a distance. Dr. Casavant asked what was located upstream from the property that has mineral potential. Mr. Hays said that most mineral exploration is in the Patagonias, and there are a few entities with test drilling rights on the USFS land. Dr. Casavant asked if there were a map of the mineral potential in the area. Mr. Hays said that the County Recorders for Santa Cruz have some older mineral claims maps. Further discussion on mineral rights followed.

Chair Hare noted that there is a Bill before the US Congress to withdraw eastern Santa Cruz and Pima Counties from all mineral entry, but it may not affect current claims. Dr.

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Casavant recommends review of the mining issue and Chair Hare states that he will confer with his office staff who have been working on these issues.

Mr. Stone said that a fairly clear primary purpose is the biological diversity focus on the aquatic species, presumably fish and perhaps snails. He further notes the riparian and hydrologic processes and species should be the primary focus and a clear purpose of why and what he manage for. This is particularly important considering AGFD's partnership.

Chair Hare noted that he was comfortable with using Mr. Stone's suggestions as to the reasons for the acquisition, as follows: hydrological processes, aquatic resources, riparian vegetation, and the aquatic species including fish, frogs and birds. He asked for a motion for Staff to craft a recommendation including that language and partnership information.

Ms. Roberts suggested that the recommendation also include having a partnership meeting, and a presentation to ASP Executive Staff and the Board in the fall. Mr. Ream noted that there will be Board meetings in September and November; the September meeting is traditionally devoted to approving grant applications.

Mr. Stone offered to make a motion with the intent that this motion will be amended as discussion follows. Chair Hare noted that since the presentation to the Board should happen at the November meeting, there would be time to ensure that all the steps necessary would take place.

Mr. Stone moved to recommend to the Arizona State Parks Board that, with all diligent speed and focus, take a full leadership role in developing partnerships toward acquisition and conservation of the Sonoita Creek Ranch properties for the purpose of conserving and maintaining hydrological processes that will support rehabilitation of riparian process that yield aquatic habitat for various aquatic or riparian dependent species. Mr. Hays seconded. Chair Hare suggested amending the motion as follows: "...for the purpose of conserving and maintaining hydrologic processes that support the rehabilitation and conservation of riparian and aquatic habitat and species therein." The change was made, and Chair Hare also suggested removing "rehabilitation".

The motion then read: "Mr. Stone moved to recommend to the Arizona State Parks Board, that, with all diligent speed and focus, take a full leadership role in developing partnerships toward acquisition and conservation of the Sonoita Creek Ranch properties for the purpose of conserving and maintaining hydrologic processes that support the conservation of riparian and aquatic habitat and species therein." Further discussion followed on whether to table the motion to allow for better wording. Ms. Roberts noted that this recommendation will go to Mr. Ream to discuss with Executive Staff prior to the November presentation to the Board with the partnership members. NAPAC chose to go forward with the motion as is, for the inclusiveness. Both Mr. Stone and Mr. Hays affirmed the motion. The motion carried with no further discussion.

Steve Haas at Sonoita Creek State Natural Area spoke about the possibility of notifying Joan Scott and the owner that this motion had been made and adopted. Ms. Roberts noted that she will speak to Ms. Scott and that the partnership meeting should be organized by Ms. Scott.

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3. Review and discuss facilitating communication between NAPAC members and ASP staff.

Ms. Roberts said that there has been cross-communication and some frustration around the open meeting law with NAPAC members. Chair Hare said that it would be useful to do more information sharing by eMail, but that is not possible without breaking the law. Ms. Roberts noted that the discussion had been to provide all information to Ms. Shulman, who would then disseminate it to the proper staff person or NAPAC member. This has fallen by the wayside, and thus the cross-communication. Ms. Roberts said that reviewing the communication procedures and gathering some ideas about what would work for the members would be useful. Ms. Kennedy suggested that an eMail address be set up that would do only outgoing messages. That would eliminate the possibility of “reply-all” issues, as well as making a response to the eMail more active. Ms. Shulman said that she would follow up with the technical side at ASP. There was also discussion of using the Gemini server to help disseminate information. This creates a problem with forming virtual quorums, so may not be possible. Chair Hare noted that there will be some thought and consideration to go into the subject before the next full committee in September.

4. Review and discuss volunteer recognition for advisory committees.
This item tabled until next meeting.

5. Discuss new member recruitment and NAPAC application.

Ms. Shulman will be sending copies of the NAPAC application to NAPAC members for disbursement to qualified potential members. Chair Hare asked who would have expiring terms. Ms. Shulman noted that Chair Hare, Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Hays are expiring. (It also transpires that Mr. Young has an expiring term at the end of 2008 as well.) The deadline for applications is September 26, 2008, and NAPAC may want to consider an October meeting to recommend new members.

E. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Natural Areas Management Guidelines (NAMG) committee: Update and report on progress.

No report given in the interest of time.

2. Land Acquisition and Prioritization Subcommittee: Update and report.

No report given in the interest of time and attendance.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

G. BOARD COMMENTS, REQUESTS, AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Revisit the tabled agenda items; Bob Sejkora regarding water rights; Max Castillo having a meeting on August 5 with the USFS; revisit TNC CAP planning.

H. TIME AND PLACE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

This item not discussed in the interest of time, however members will provide Ms. Roberts with their availability for subcommittee meetings designed to complete work in both areas. Ms. Kennedy volunteered the Appleton Research Ranch for a two-day workshop to complete the management guidelines.

Draft Minutes
Meeting of 7/24/08

I. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hare adjourned the meeting at 3:43pm.

Prepared by Ruth Shulman on August 5, 2008, and reviewed by Joanne M. Roberts, Arizona State Parks NAPAC Coordinator.

APPROVED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON

Affirmed by:

_____ Date: _____
Trevor Hare, Chair